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294 They make as much as 1*s.* or 2*s.* on a market day; and shortly before the Great *Sallah*, for a week or ten days, they can reckon upon daily earnings up to 4*s.* Most machine-tailors do not buy their own material, but prefer to make up material brought by the customer, whom they charge a 'wage' (*lada*) of 2*d.* to 4*d.* a cloth. It is not surprising that the men who have taken up this most modern industry are mostly young men. They come partly from tailor families, but partly also—like many other 'free' craftsmen—from other professions and other social classes. The contribution of the 'gentry' is, again, considerable. Two of the five machine-[565] tailors from Bida who are now working on the village market of Jebba Island are descendants of titled families.

435 You can buy a sewing-machine in Bida (second-hand or new) for £2 to £3. Some young men have themselves bought their own sewing-294 machines with money made in wage-labour. More often the sewing-543 machine is bought by the father of the young man (or occasionally his mother), who by this purchase sets up his son in an independent trade—as blacksmiths or weavers equip their sons with tools and looms to start them on their independent work. Unlike these craftsmen, however, the father of the machine-tailor may provide the machine before his son is married, and expect him then to find himself the money for his bride-price. The son who is yet unmarried may hand over a half or a third of his earnings to his father—but this is not a rigid rule. Married sons [431] work invariably on their own; an occasional gift of five kola-nuts (never more) to the father is an act of filial piety rather than a recognition of 'business relations'.

294 The introduction of sewing-machines gives a new meaning to the question of maintenance of labour. Sewing-machines represent by far the most expensive means of production used in native crafts. They must occasionally be repaired, spare parts have to be bought, and eventually the whole machine will have to be replaced. The cost of maintaining these means of production seems more than balanced by the regular profits derived from the use of the sewing-machines. The question of obsolescence and replacement has not yet become acute. But already the problem of maintenance of labour in this new sense is felt. Blacksmiths and glass-workers, as we have seen, invest only a little money in their means of production—their main capital is labour. Weavers have to purchase looms and thus to invest a certain capital in tools; but specialized skill and training under experienced masters represent as much a 'working capital' as does loom or money. In machine-tailoring the money capital (the purchase money for the sewing-machine) represents the only investment of the craftsman; training and special skill are negligible factors. The money returns are, in fact, disproportionately high, measured by the traditional standards of skill or length of training. Here means of production and profit-bearing capital become one and the same thing. The machine must itself produce the profits out of which it will have to be replaced some day; and, through the medium of the machine, capital must reproduce itself, almost automatically. We discover, in a typical native home industry, the first traces of the modern industrial system.

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462 441 snuff and smoking, its modern counterpart, cigarettes, and kola-nuts, although they are used mostly by men. To the second category belong the various products of Nupe fashion industry, rings, bracelets, chains, ladles, glass-ware, beads, and also the low carved stools, made by the carpenters, on which the Nupe women are wont to sit. The products of women's crafts are traded by women, irrespective of their use: thus the women sell cloth woven by women (used chiefly for women's dresses), indigo dye (which may be used by and for the men), native soap and pots, including the pitchers which the men use for ablutions. All goods produced by men and used by men are marketed by male traders: hoes, axes, arms, gowns, straw hats, books, leather-work, &c. Goods used by both sexes are traded by both men and women: for example, mats, and certain kinds of cloth of native or European make. Live stock is always marketed by men, only chickens are sometimes sold on the market by women.

462 441 868 Throughout this description the term 'woman' means married women as well as girls, mothers and wives as well as daughters. Small girls of 6 or 8 will already 'keep shop' in play, sitting behind a basket in which they have arranged a few pebbles, little rags of cloth or cigarette tins filled with sand, and silently display their 'goods', as they have seen their mothers and elder sisters do. Mothers always take their young girls to the market, letting them sit beside them and, if they are big enough, carry some of the loads on the way there and back. Girls of 12 or 13 will assist their mothers or deputize for them when they are called away; or they will take some of the cooked food which the women sell, and walk through the market and adjoining streets, crying out the wares, while the mother remains sitting behind her basket. This is, incidentally, an interesting division of labour between mother and daughter, and old and young trader in general. For it is against the dignity of grown-up [576] women to cry out their wares—only young girls may do that. A girl of 14 or 16 is already fully initiated into the secrets of commerce, and will soon start to trade on her own, with a capital of a few pennies or a small store of grain or ground-nuts given her by her mother. By degrees the capital and the scope of her business will grow. I remember a court case in Bida in which two girls, between 14 and 15 years of age, had been summoned because they had fought on the market. The fight was about a piece of cloth which one girl had taken from the other, agreeing to buy it for a certain amount; but later she declared it to be too dear, and paid only half the agreed price. The price of the cloth was 6*d*., and the people in the court were very amused about this commercial transaction in (as the *Alkali* put it) 'little girl's rags'. However, 'little girl's rags' become real cloth, and even more valuable goods, in the course of time, and when the girl marries she is a fully fledged trader, and fully versed in the art of marketing which will be one of her duties as a married woman. Her [428 562] earnings remain her own property and cannot during her lifetime be touched by her husband. Only when she dies will the husband be entitled to inherit her property.

●593 562 This brings us to the question of the economic inequality of husband and wife. It is implied in this division of labour between the sexes which

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makes the women the main traders of the country that the women can as a rule command more liquid capital than the men. In this sense, referring to the liquid resources, it can be said that the Nupe women are on the whole wealthier than the men. This does not mean that their financial position is entirely unaffected by the limited resources of the husband. The wives of small farmers and craftsmen or, generally, impecunious husbands, have little scope for their commercial activities, and may be unable to derive from the household resources the necessary working capital for a profitable independent enterprise. Where there is little to sell there can be little profit; and this small profit may be swallowed up by the normal household expenditure. Even the utensils and goods which constitute the wife's dowry may disappear gradually in a household where there is no money with which to replace the stock of pots, clothes, and ornaments—the woman's initial 'capital' (see p. 351). The household of a diviner in Bida, whom I knew well, was a typical case. The man was of poor health, unable to do any serious work, and had to rely entirely on his income from divining, which was small and irregular. The wife maintained the household, poor and simple as it was. She was about 40 years old; she had nothing left of her dowry save the few rags which she wore, and a few damaged pots. Every day she bought grain for 6*d.* on the market, made corn-gruel and corn-water, and sold this food in the mornings in the street, with a total profit of 2*d.* With this money she kept herself and her husband and a small child.

But usually the wives even of men whom one would hardly call prosperous attain an impressive degree of solvency. Solvency in this connexion is a relative term, as the pecuniary demands which the wives have to meet are much smaller than those which devolve on the men as the heads of the household. Yet in many cases the women come to the succour of their men even in expenses of the latter kind. It is by no means rare, especially in Bida, to find families in which a mother undertakes to pay the bride-price for the sons. Much more widespread is the practice of wives lending their husbands money, for example, for the payment of tax. Of this practice we shall hear more later. Let me emphasize here the dependence of the husband on his wife with regard to these monetary obligations—a dependence which must increase as the independent economic enterprise of the women, commerce, is increasing in scope. This fact is essential for the understanding of certain moral issues involved in the expansion of women's trade in Nupe.

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I have stated earlier that the line of distinction between professional and occasional traders is much more fluid among the women than among the men. Wives of farmers, craftsmen, Mallams, noblemen, traders, officials—they all are, or may be, traders. The enormous variety in the trade which is carried out by the Nupe women, and in the degree of their 'professionalization', cannot be reduced to a simple formula. The woman who sells every morning two or three dozen packets of home-made *kamu* (corn-gruel) for a tenth of a penny each, and the woman who buys £5 worth of rice, kola-nuts, or European cloth, do not really differ in anything except in the amount of capital they can lay their hands on. The difference in the distance which they cover when

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further elaborated in popular belief; for it is generally held that a witch who would attack her own flesh and blood cannot do so alone but must enlist the help of other witches, not related to the victim. Kinship, then, in some measure deflects and frustrates the evil designs of witches. It is in fact true that witches are only rarely accused of harming their own blood relations; I recorded only two cases of this kind, both referring to the witch's own children. But the victims are not necessarily strangers; as often they are affinal relations of the woman witch (her son-in-law, her husband, his brother or the brother's children, or the husband's children by another wife).

From this varied evidence the following picture of the witch emerges: she is the enemy of men and of male authority; she seeks to dominate men; her evilness is somehow bound up with married state and occasionally with old age, that is, age beyond child-bearing; and her evilness is often directed against a husband and his kin. Now all these traits fall into place against the background of that other belief which links witchcraft with the economic position of the women; for seen against this background, and allowing for the fantasy disguise, the witch is accused of doing mystically precisely what the women, in virtue of their economic power, are accused of doing in real life. So that the witchcraft beliefs and fears paraphrase a true state of affairs and the anxieties and frustrations arising from it. Consider, then, for a moment that 'true state of affairs'.

To begin with, a great many Nupe men, peasants as well as craftsmen or members of the 'free professions' in the town, are heavily in debt to their trader-wives, on whom they often have to rely for money for tools, for some unforeseen heavy expenditure, and even for such items as the brideprice of a son or funeral expenses, which it is the man's duty to defray. If this dependence on the wife must detract from the man's proper status as the 'breadwinner', his authority is seriously diminished also by another factor. In the Nupe kinship organization most rights and obligations descend in the paternal line; and as sons (to a lesser extent, daughters) derive their kin group membership (membership of a particular 'house') from their fathers, have a place in their father's home and labour team, and inherit his property, land or profession, so they normally look to him or his male kin for economic support. But where the mother is the richer, the inheritance she will leave will be at least as important, and even while she is still alive her sons or daughters will turn to her for financial help. Frequently, in fact, the mother will pay directly, and not only through loans made to her husband, for a son's marriage, buy him clothes or luxuries, or shoulder the cost of a more expensive

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education. Let me make it clear that the mother is always expected to do the best for her children, and to pamper them in small matters, by giving them sweets, tasty tit-bits, and occasional presents. Nor is her more consequential economic help strictly unexpected and against the rule: but it is a rule of *faute de mieux*, whose coming into play inevitably connotes the failure of the more basic rule, that it is the father's role to meet the economic requirements of the household. Here, as in the instance mentioned before, the economic independence of the women connotes the inadequacy of the men.

There is a further point, already touched upon in a previous context. In Nupe, the women traders are proverbially 'bad' wives and 'bad' women, that is, women of loose and immoral character. Going on long journeys as they regularly do, they neglect their household duties and, while away from home, live the life of prostitutes. This is true even of the many women who only visit the market in the town, the Bida night market being a recognized place of assignation. All this is bad enough in the case of childless women; but in their case such immoral conduct is condoned, if with a shrug of the shoulders. As proverbial, however, as the moral laxity of the women traders is their desire to avoid having children. It is they who are the most regular customers of the various dealers in 'contraceptives'. They thus pile one iniquity upon another, having chosen not only unchastity but that utterly unnatural and despicable thing, voluntary barrenness.

Whether the woman exceeds the proper role of a wife and mother or rejects it, in part or entirely, she has successfully set aside a believed-in social norm. Now, this is no longer an instance of social abnormality, rather the opposite, if by 'normality' we mean all that is common, usual, expected: but it is a normality one hates and regrets, and contrasts with a desired state of affairs unhappily uncommon. This is borne out in every conversation; in the many quarrels between husbands and wives; in the many divorces and separations (and equally in the resigned attitude of husbands); in the comments of the medicine experts which we quoted before; in nostalgic talks of the men about a happier past when 'women knew their place'; and in the exclusion of unchaste and childless women from religious ceremonials.

This, then, is a clash between ideal and reality. But it is in no sense seen as fortuitous or transitory, as the result of some unfortunate maladjustment which could have been avoided and can conceivably be set right if one only made the effort. The harking-back to 'the good old days' is merely an escape from a reality which one is helpless to alter. For no one speaks about a future when everything should be better than it is now; and though the

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impact of alien influences and the vast increase in trade and traffic in the last few decades may well have aggravated the situation, all the available evidence (of genealogies and life histories) proves that the morals of women and the fate of marriages were, for the last four or five generations at least, much what they are today. Nor is this harking-back more than half-hearted; no one would claim that there was a time when all women were chaste and submissive, when they did not trade and earn money, and when contraceptive practices were unknown. Indeed such a claim, were it ever made, would be belied by the character of the *gunnu* ritual and by various legends and stories. Briefly, for the people the ideal was always out of step with the reality; so that we must judge this conflict to be inherent in the make-up of the society, whose economic system (which has certain moral consequences) is as unquestioned as are its ethical conceptions (which condemn these consequences).

This is important: for it is the inescapable nature of the conflict which finds expression in the belief in women witches. Nupe society, forced into an ambivalent attitude towards the role of women, which it cannot but accept and cannot but hate and call evil, also ascribes to them the powers of witchcraft. The coincidence as such is a matter of observed fact. But we can go further, and interpolate the psychological mechanism which turns the coincidence into a causal nexus, and hence enables us to call one thing the 'cause' and the other the 'symptom'. The mechanism is familiar: it lies in the projection of internal conflicts and of the frustrations so caused upon an external agent, real or imaginary. In our case, the awareness of an ideal state disturbed fastens upon the successful disturber; the helplessness in the face of a threatening situation turns into the positive fear of persons; and while one is incapable of dealing with the situation, one can at least deal with concrete individuals, whom one can accuse, persecute, and punish. So that in being made the witches of the society, the women are made to carry its fault or failure.

It is clear that this explanation holds good only on the assumption that the beliefs in witchcraft have been fashioned by men; for on almost every point we argued from a male standpoint. The legitimacy of this assumption need hardly be defended. The assertion of mundane morality, through legal institutions, falls to the men exclusively; above all, Nupe religion, its practices and doctrine, are fundamentally a male concern; and as it is the men who know and speculate about religion and have charge of the transmission of religious knowledge, so the notions of witchcraft must have been their creation. Situations of this kind are of course common; a great many societies are in this sense men-made and men-run; and if, like Nupe, they also afford considerable initiative and import-

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They are then turned out of the house, but are allowed to live in the vicinity, and continue to receive food and protection in return for whatever work is required of them. There are dependants of both sexes, and the unambitious often prefer to spend their whole lives in this manner. Slaves were treated in much the same manner, and children born in captivity were accounted free.

Motherhood is the great desire of the women, and every New Year the Mallams proclaim which will be the best months in that year for child-bearing. They have a strong belief in a medicine-man called "Soba," who lives in the bush at Lemo, between Bida and Zungeru, and who gives medicines to produce fertility. He is seldom to be found in person, but there are guardians in the bush who act as intermediaries.

When a child is born it is nourished on water, in which the leaves of the Aduruku tree (or the bark and leaves of some seven to ten different kinds of trees, the mixture is termed "dauri") have been boiled for three to seven days. It is poured into their mouths. This continues if the mother's milk is not good, for infants are never given the milk of any animal. After seven days the child is named, and both boys and girls are called after their father and after his father, though their first name be different. They are seldom called after their mother. The aboriginal custom is somewhat different, a girl being named on the eighth, a boy on the ninth day after birth. All the relatives assemble after dawn, certain roots are placed in a pot and beer poured over them. Some is poured as a libation on the ground, the head of the family then drinks some himself, conjuring the good spirit of medicine to protect the child's life, which he designates by name. The guests then consume two pots of beer, and a feast is held with the usual dancing, drumming and singing.

Boys are circumcised by the barber at the age of six or seven, after which they commence working on the farms. When they approach the age of puberty they leave their parents' house, and build themselves a separate hut.*

The eldest child, whether boy or girl, is hated by its parents; they will not look at it, and a large percentage die of neglect. They never call it anything individual, only "boy" or "girl," and the mother would refuse to feed it but that her husband's parents come and live with her for three months to see that she fulfils that duty. Sometimes they take the baby away with them and give it to some wet-nurse, but in no case is the first-born left with its parents after it is weaned. The grandfather always takes it. It has been asserted that the mother will not suckle her first-born child because her milk is unwholesome.

* Sapke and Mokwa.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922
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853 This is tested by an ant (chinaka) being placed therein, and
787 if it drowns the child is given to a wet-nurse and the mother is medically treated. This custom is particularly prevalent amongst riverain Nupe.

856 Subsequent children are thoroughly spoilt until they reach
593 the age of three or four years when, amongst the well-to-do, at all events, the mother is thought to be too fond to make a good guardian. Girls are usually weaned at the age of three years,
[849] boys not until they are four. The children may, therefore, be
855 sent right away to a boarding-school for some ten years, or
874 the relations may take them to a day school, arranging their
593 marriages, and in fact divorcing them so entirely from their own parents that the only connection left is inheritance. If the grandfather is alive he distributes the children amongst their uncles and aunts on the male side, generally in order of seniority. They call them father and mother, and when grown-up would visit them and give them money before going to their true parents. The foster-parents would equally go to their foster children for support in their old age, and only to their own children in the last resort.

874 A successful Mallam will have a school containing fifty or sixty children, amongst whom he keeps up a rigid discipline by means of the rod, and if a child attempts to run away it is put into leg-irons. There are whole holidays on Thursdays and Fridays, but on working days the hours are 4 to 6 and 7 to 11 a.m., and 2 to 4 and 7 to 8 p.m. Day scholars miss the first two hours. The children learn the Koran, and reading and writing in Arabic characters, then their own language, and then Haussa; sewing, and at a later stage sums. Boys and girls work and play together, but when girls reach a marriageable age they are taught by the Mallam's wives. There are no regular holidays, and children remain for some ten years without a break. When they leave the school the Mallam
[875] receives a fee of 20,000 cowries, in addition to which there may or may not be complimentary presents given. The young scholar, on reaching home, goes to salute the Sarki and all elders, and receives a dash from each to celebrate the home-coming.

643 The same customs that apply to the commoner apply to the
874 Chiefs and Emirs. His children are also sent to school, and he
855 never keeps his first-born. In questions of marriage it is he
581 who takes the first step, and he will often give his daughters in marriage to the merest talaka, and may even marry a peasant girl himself without incurring reproach.

642 The Emir of Bida keeps up an elaborate state. He sends food to all visitors to his capital and provides them with accommodation. He summons Chiefs to audiences, and holds a levee in the palace courtyard every Friday morning between 7 and 8 a.m., where all or any of his subjects assemble to salute him but he does not enter into conversation with anyone then.